Delay in implementation of Sankhya Vahini Project

5368. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has expressed concern at the delay in implementing the Sankhya Vahini Project;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the bottenecks standing as impediments to the project and the steps taken/proposed to be taken to create expeditiously the high speed data network?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has drawn attention to delay in signing of the Joint Venture agreement and other activities associated with the setting up of the project even after two months of approval by the Cabinet.

(c) There are no impediments as such. Both the Joint Venture agreement as well as the detailed project estimate which must precede actual commencement of the project work, are at various stages of processing.

Out of turn allotment of PCO/STD booths in Anisabad, Patna

†5369. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of applications for PCO/STD booths laying pending in Anisabad Telephone Exchange, Patna since 1997;

(b) what are the reasons therefor and whether there is any provision of 'out of turn' allotment of the booths to the applicants under unemployed category;

(c) if so, what is the total number of applicants under unemployed category who have neen given 'Out of turn' allotment of booths since 1997;

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government would consider any proposal for giving 'out of turn' allotment of booths to the applicants under the said category?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, 343 applications for allotment of PCO/STD booths are laying pending in Anisabad Telephone Exchange, Patna.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) The reasons for pending was earlier due to non-holding of STD/PCO Allotment Committee meeting. The STD/PCO allotment policy has been revised. As a part of the revised policy, the STD/PCO allotment committees have been dissolved and STD/PCOs are allotted liberally to all the applicants as per their registration. All the pending applications are under process, as per the provisions of the liberalised policy. Sir, there is provision for out of turn allotment of the booths to certain categories of unemployed applicants such as war widows, handicapped, etc.

(c) 13 Nos. of STD/PCO booths have been allotted on out of turn basis since 1997 in Anisabad Telephone Exchange.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

Group 'D' status to casual employees in Sultanpur District

†5370. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has passed an order in respect of casual posted employees working in Department of Posts to the effect that all the employees working since 29th November, 1989 should be given Group 'D' temporary status;

(b) the number of such employees in Sultanpur district together with the number of employees to whom Group 'D' status has been given;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that certain employees in the district who are working since 1984 have not been given Group 'D' status and are being paid Rs. 797 per month only; and

(d) whether Government will issue instructions to appoint them on Group 'D' post immediately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) In compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, a Scheme was drawn up by the Department of Posts. Under the Scheme temporary status would be conferred on the full-time casual labourers in employment as on 29.11.89 and who continued to be currently employed and rendered continuous service of atleast one year. During the year, they must have been engaged for a period of 240 days (206 days in the case of offices observing five days week). Subsequently, the Scheme was extended to those full time casual labourers who were engaged after 29.11.89 and up to 1.9.93 for grant of benefits under the Scheme. Full time casual labourers conferred with temporary status are treated at par with temporary Group 'D'